MOUNT EPHRAIM
(Gutheim, Frederick A., House)
23720 Mount Ephraim Road
Dickerson
Montgomery County
Maryland

HABS NO. MD-967

HABS MD, 16-DICK, 2-

PHOTOGRAPHS

AND WRITTEN HISTORICAL DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HABS MD 16-DICK,

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY MOUNT EPHRAIM

2-

HABS No. MD-967

Location:

23720 Mount Ephraim Road (northwest corner of Mount Ephraim Road and Harris Road), Dickerson, Montgomery County, Maryland.

Present Owner:

Frederick A. and Mary P. Gutheim

Present Occupant:

Frederick A. and Mary P. Gutheim

Significance:

Mount Ephraim is significant as the rural vernacular home of a storekeeper and farmer, built by a local carpenter/builder, using architectural pattern books of the mid-19th century. Although the L-shaped plan of this dwelling is typical of the time and place in which it was constructed, it is slightly more elaborate than the average, reflecting its owners wealth and his position as the community's storekeeper. It is constructed of brick rather then frame, as generally found in this area and though rather simple, it was nicely appointed with decorative window heads, facade porch with double doors opening on to it from the second floor and a center gable facade (the porch and center gable were removed in Inside is a curved stairway. While the exterior reflects the architectural values of rural, mid-19th century america, the interior is a reflection of the modern movement and the reduction to basic form, and continous living spaces.

The house was the center of Ephraim G. Harris' small commercial complex. This corner, known as "Mount Ephraim," included a brick store building with a post office, a tavern, blacksmith shop, etc. It thus represents a pattern in the early settlement and growth of rural areas, whereby services sprang up to meet the needs of the surrounding community, and the traffic which moved through it. In the case of Mount Ephraim, it was at the crossroads of established routes which connected larger settlements. The store also served soldiers at a nearby signal station during the Civil War. Although historic maps indicate a small crossroads settlement here in the last quarter of nineteenth century, all that remains now is this brick residence and an adjacent white frame cottage, "Beardshear," which probably dates from the ante-bellum years.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

- Date of erection: 1866-1868. Although Ephraim G. Harris did not receive title to this property until 1868, it was evidently only a legal formality, since the property had been in the family for some time, and earlier evidence exists of the store. buildings, located at this corner, appear on both the Martinent & Bond Map of 1865 and 1879 Hopkin's Atlas. On both, one is marked as "E.G. Harris Store", the other, unmarked could then possibly be his residence. The Montgomery County Commissioners Assessment Books first list a store building on this site in 1862 (the previous reference in 1858 lists no improvements or stock in trade, etc.). It was listed under the names of both William N. Harris, and his son, Ephraim Harris, with \$550 worth of stock in trade. Only the store building is listed specifically. The property was assessed again in 1866, indicated no change in the value of the property or the improvements but a jump to \$2,000 worth of stock in trade. When next assessed in 1868, the same amount of stock in trade is seen but there is, however, an additional improvement value of \$500. This is a likely indication of the construction of the current brick house (which may have replaced the structure appearing here in 1865, or indicate the completion of a dwelling then under construction?).
- 2. Architect: According to descendants of the architect/builder, William T. Hilton, Mr. Hilton used one of the numerous "builder's books" in use during the mid-19th century. These books provided small, local builders such as W.T. Hilton with plans and details, reflecting the popular architectural styles of the day (Gail Rothrock, ed. Circling Historic Landscapes. Sugarloaf Regional Trails, p. 46).
- 3. Original and subsequent owners: The following is a complete chain of title to the land on which the structure stands from 1846, the year that the property was acquired by the Harris family who had the house built, and the current time. Also included are equity cases and wills involved in the chain of title. Reference is to the Land Records Office and the Montgomery County Register of Wills of the Montgomery County Courthouse, Rockville, Maryland.
- Deed November 27, 1846, liber STS 2, folio 301.

 John Poole and Anna R. Poole, his wife of Montgomery County, Md.

 To

 William Francis Piles and Sarah Harris, both of Montgomery

County, Md.

MOUNT EPHRAIM HABS No. MD-967 (Page 3)

- Deed June 15, 1868, liber EBP 5, folio 266
 William F. Piles, Sarah Harris, Solomon Harris, Abraham S.
 Harris, Samuel Darby and Mary A. Darby, his wife; William C.D.
 Simmons and Eliza P. Simmons, his wife; all of Montgomery
 County, Md.
 To
 Ephraim G. Harris, of Montgomery County, Md.
- Equity Case #765, passed January 28, 1889, Judgment Record JA 4/226

 Ida J. Harris et al, complainants
 vs.

 David Fulton Harris, et al, defendants.

 All heirs (adult vs. infant children) of Ephraim G. Harris
- 1890 Deed February 26, 1890, liber JA 17, folio 133
 Levi C. Zeigler, appointed trustee by decree of circuit court, of Montgomery County
 To
 Ida J. Dronenburg, of Montgomery County
- 1903 Deed August 27, 1903, liber TD 27, folio 26
 Ida J. Dronenburg and Reverdy Dronenburg, of Montgomery County
 To
 Clinton M. Moore, of Montgomery County
- 1904 Deed September 29, 1904, liber 178, folio 489
 Clinton M. Moore and Anna M. Moore, his wife of Montgomery
 County
 To
 Elizabeth A. Nicholson, of Montgomery County
- 1909 Equity Case # 2449, passed April 29, 1909, Judgment Record 10/10
 Elizabeth A. Nicholson, et al, complainants vs.
 Beulah C. Nicholson and Frank B. Nicholson, defendants widow (Elizabeth) and heirs-at-law of Lawrence B. Nicholson
- 1909 Deed July 22, 1909, Liber 208, folio 119
 Elizabeth A. Nicholson, of Montgomery County
 To
 Lillie E. Jones and Linwood B. Nicholson, of Montgomery County
- 1910 Deed November 3, 1910, liber 216, folio 207
 Lillie E. Jones (wife of Lawrence B. Jones, the grantee hereinafter named) and Linwood B. Nicholson, unmarried, both of Montgomery County
 To
 Lawrence B. Jones

- 1912 Deed August 12, 1912, liber 228, folio 479
 Lawrence B. Jones and Lillie E. Jones, his wife, both of
 Montgomery County
 To
 Beulah C. Jones
- 1919 Deed April 23, 1919, liber 278, folio 487
 Beulah C. Jones and Samuel C. Jones, of Montgomery County
 To
 François F. Darrieulat and Maria Louise Darrieulat, his wife
- 1941 Deed October 17, 1941, liber 638, folio 168
 Marie Louise Darrieulat, unmarried (widow)
 To
 Frederick A. Gutheim and Mary Purdon Gutheim, his wife
- 4. Builders, contractor, suppliers:
 - a. Builder/contractor: William T. Hilton, a carpenter and builder from nearby Barnesville, designed and constructed the house, based on plans and designs outlined in builders books of the mid-19th century. A number of buildings in this area have been attributed to Mr. Hilton, who presumably never ventured outside this general community. Like many carpenters of his day, Hilton also operated an undertaking business. The Hilton carpentry shop still stands with the sign, taken from the former woodworking mill nearby, which reads, "William Hilton & Sons- Carpenters and Undertakers". Also, Mr. Gutheim reported that during their early years of residency here he employed two elderly carpenters who had been apprenticed by W.T. Hilton. They stated that Mr. Hilton had brought them here to Mount Ephraim years ago to show them an example of his work.
 - b. Suppliers: The materials were all acquired locally. Wooden elements presumably came from Mr. Hilton's mill. The brick was said to have been manufactured and fired on the site from clay found locally. The slate for the roof was quarried from a site nearby.
- 5. Original plans and construction: No original plans or drawings are known to exist though, as mentioned, the plans came from builders pattern books of the day. According to the current owner, Mr. Gutheim, who has seen one of these books in the possession of the family of the builder, a plan very closely resembling his house could be seen. Hilton's extensive collection of tools are still in the family's possession in Barnesville, but the books, accounts and other Hilton records are with another branch of the family on the Eastern Shore (as located by Brice Clagett of the Maryland Historical Trust). In fact, another

similar house, also built by Hilton, exists in the area (the Issac Davis House, approximately. 2 1/2 miles away on Davis Road).

Drawings were executed, however, in 1941 at the time that the current owner purchased and remodeled the house. Drawings were done both of the existing conditions and of the proposed changes. The proposed changes were done by the well known Washington, D.C. architect, Julian E. Berla, with the architectural firm of Berla & Abel (Joseph), designers of Art Deco/International style buildings.

Other architects participated in the remodeling as well. The interiors of the library and living room were drawn by Wilhelm (Willo) Von Moltke. The California architect, Vernon DeMars, designed the kitchen entrance on the north side. The approach to the entrance from the parking area was part of the garden design by Dan Kiley. The measured drawings of the existing conditions of the house were made by the architect/artist, Alfred McAdams (see drawings, pages 13-20).

According to these plans, and descriptions in equity cases, the exterior facade originally had a bracketed center gable with a small window in it and a period porch running the length of the facade. Mr. Gutheim also stated that the original kitchen was located in the current living room and had a large, cook fireplace. The kitchen had been moved, however, by the time that he purchased the house, onto what is now the restored rear porch.

6. Alterations and Additions: Fairly extensive alternations were made to the residence during the 1941 remodeling. Changes to the exterior include the removal of a porch which once ran the length of the facade (Equity Case #2449, Judgment Record 10/1, "advertisement of property," 1909), and the removal of an ornamental center gable. A small, fixed window was also added onto the the rear of the house.

Extensive changes were made to the interior of the house. The walls which created the original entry hall and the division of the two rooms on the north side of the house were removed. A new kitchen was added in the front of the house to replace a kitchen previously added in the rear porch area. The rear porch, which had been enclosed to create a kitchen was returned to its original condition. Original fireplaces (mantels and brick chimney) have been replaced (for more information see the drawings, data pages 13-20). Also removed were the ornamented stair risers and the ceiling moldings (particularly in the hallway). Added, were electrical wiring, plumbing and heating fixtures, but with minimal inpact on the structure.

B. Historical Context:

The house was built 1866-1868 for Ephraim G. Harris, a farmer and storekeeper who is said to have made the money to finance its construction through the sale of liquor to soldiers of the Civil War, at his store and restaurant or tavern located here. The property is in fact located near the site of the military signal station which provided the standard communication of the day. The house and store site are located at the intersection of two well traveled roads, the main road from Barnesville to Frederick (now Harris Road) and the route from the furnace forge at the mouth of the Monocacy to the bloomery forge in Urbana. This intersection appears on the Martinet & Bond Map of 1865 and the Hopkins Atlas of 1879 as "Mount Ephraim." It is known that Ephraim Harris' store included a post office. He evidently operated a tavern here as well, judging by an inventory of the stock in trade which included not much other than 117 gallons of whiskey and a collection of pint bottles, jars and glassware. Also on the site was a blacksmith shop and collection of tenant houses and outbuildings (Equity Case #765, Judgment Record JA 4/226 and Register of Wills, Inventories RWC 18/148). The name of the community, Mount Ephraim, is said to have been a reference to both the mountainous biblical Mount Ephraim as compared to the Sugarloaf mountains at the foothills of which this site is located, and the extreme height of Ephraim Harris himself.

The property came into the Harris family in 1846 when it was acquired by Ephraim's mother, Sarah Harris (with her brother as trustee). According to the deed, Sarah Harris' father, Francis Piles had leased certain "negroes," presumably slaves, to his daughter which he agreed "might be sold for the purpose of purchasing a home if his daughter aforesaid required it.... the negros should be sold provided a farm or home should be purchased with the proceeds...." (Deed STS 2/301). Thus the slaves were sold and 225 acres here purchased.

Sarah married William Harris who passed away a few years prior to the conveyance of approximately 15 acres of it to their son, Ephraim, presumably as his inheritance. According to Ephraim's deed of 1868, "whereas Ephraim G. Harris desires a portion of said land to be deeded to himself separately and he consents and obligates himself by receiving this deed to accept the portion of land hereby conveyed as and for his full share and portion of said land..." (Deed EBP 5/266). In fact, the tax records indicate that Ephraim and his father, William Harris had already established the store here, by 1862.

Ephraim resided here with his family until his death in the spring of 1888. His personal inventory indicates that he had acquired much land and property. In addition to being a store and tavern keeper, he was also a farmer and a blacksmith. According to the advertisement for the sale of his house and store property following his death the improvements included, "One brick house of seven rooms, hallway above and below, 40 x 50 feet, wagon shed and granary, also a brick dairy

and all necessary outbuildings.... also one brick store house 20 x 36 feet with an excellent cellar....two frame houses one story and a half....blacksmith shop and stable.... a good restaurant, on said premises, 100 yards from the store house in Frederick County, Md." (Equity Case #765, Judgment Record JA 4/257).

Meanwhile, with the coming of the B&O's Metropolitan Branch in 1878, with a station in nearby Dickerson, the community of Mount Ephraim declined. Although the store, etc. continued to operate, the post office eventually was moved to Dickerson in 1912. The store building later burned (date and cause of fire unknown).

The property was purchased in February of 1890 by Ida J. Dronenburg (an Ida is listed among the children of Ephraim Harris, perhaps this is the same). It eventually fell into the hands of the Nicholson family, Lawrence B. and Elizabeth A. The Nicholsons' appear as neighbors on the historical maps of 1865 & 1879. Following the death of Lawrence Nicholson in 1904, the property was assessed and sold in 1909. An advertisement of sale describes the property at that time as "The improvements consist of a two story brick dwelling follows: house with slate roof, containing ten* rooms, two large halls and a cellar, with a porch the entire length of the house; and a one and a half story brick store house, 40 x 20 feet, with a cellar under the entire building. A two story, five room frame tenant house,.... a two story, two room frame tenant house,.... a large two story brick dairy lower floor cemented and all necessary outbuildings.... "(Equity Case #2449, Judgment Record 10/26).

The property was, however, passed on to heirs of Lawrence Nicholson until 1919. A fire was reported to have taken place here in the early twentieth century which destroyed most of the outbuildings and presumably the store house, only the foundation of which remains. In 1919 the property was purchased by Francois and Maria Louise Darrieulat. Mr. Darrieulat was known as a fencing master who coached both the olympic teams and President, Theodore Roosevelt. The house was vacant during the 1930's and then rented on and off until sold in 1941.

Mount Ephraim was purchased in 1941 by Frederick and Mary Gutheim (Deed 638/168). Mr. Gutheim, an architectural historian and editor of two volumes of Frank Lloyd Wright's writings, and planning consultant, is a retired professor of American Studies at the George Washington University in Washington, D.C. where he also founded the Graduate Program in Historic Preservation. Mr. Gutheim also had taught at

(* The change from seven rooms in 1888 to ten rooms in 1909 could be attributed to the rooms created by the enclosure of the rear porch, forming a kitchen on the first floor and a bathroom, etc.? above).

Williams College and at the University of Washington, and other In addition to teaching, he worked in Federal housing institutions. and planning agencies, as a planning consultant of international scope, and as a staff writer for the New York Herald Tribune. He is the author of a number of books relating to housing, urban development, and architecture as well as the book, The Potomac. Gutheim served as editor for "Architecture and Planning" and "Progressive Architecture," and was a architectural critic for the Washington Post. He has also been the recipient of a number of awards including the American Institute of Architects medal, and the "Trustee of America" honor, a national scale preservation honor. He is well known in Montgomery County as chairman of Sugarloaf Regional Trails, which identified and documented historic sites in western Montgomery County, and as one of the founders and first commissioners of the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission, a program set up to identify and preserve historic landmarks in the county.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

- 1. Architectural character: Mount Ephraim is of architectural interest as a documented example of a local builders translation of period styles into the rural vernacular dwelling of a storekeeper and farmer. Being constructed of brick, with slightly exagerated window heads, the house is somewhat more elaborate than the usual frame residence dating from this period, found in this area. The house has, however, been stripped of much of its exterior detailing though it does not appear that irreversible changes have been made to the exterior. The interior has undergone rather extensive changes (see plans, data pages 13-20). While the exterior still reflects primarily the ideals of rural, mid-19th century architecture, the interior as remodelled is more of a reflection of the Modern trend towards the reduction to basic form, and open, flowing spaces which also resulted in increased ventilation and bilaterial lighting.
- Condition of fabric: The house appears to be in good, sound condition. As mentioned, many detailing elements have been removed, especially in the interior where mantel, interior walls, etc. have been removed.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: This is a two story hipped roof residence with a partial, unfinished cellar. It is L-shaped with a five bay wide, one room deep main block (two bays on the north side, one being a doorway) and a one room deep, three bay by one bay rear ell. A two story porch runs along the inside wall of the ell.

- 2. Foundations: The brick walls of the house rest on a rubble stone foundation, without the demarcation of a water table (see HABS photo #MD-967-8).
- 3. Walls: The walls are of red brick, made on the site, set in a common bond pattern of one row of headers for every five rows of stretchers.
- 4. Structural system, framing: Exterior walls and major partition walls are of load bearing brick. The floors rest on log joists.
- 5. Porches: The original porch which ran the length of the facade was removed in 1941. There is a two story porch along the inside wall of the rear ell. This porch, under the hipped roof of the rear ell, is a reconstruction of the original. It is supported by plain square posts and balustrade (see HABS photo #MD-967-7).
- 6. Chimneys: There is an interior brick chimney at either end of the main block of the house, and a third chimney at the rear of the ell.

7. Openings:

- Doorways and doors: The front door, recessed and topped with an ogee arch, is flanked by fluted pilasters and sidelights. The lower panel in the sidelights is of wood with an oblong octagon shape, which matches the bottom panel of the front door (see HABS photo #MD-967-4). In the inside of the door frames are recessed wooden panels. Above the front entry is a narrow set of french doors, with a wooden bottom panel, which would have opened onto the roof of the front porch (see HABS photo #MD-967-3). There is an entry at the north side elevation of the main block, towards the front of the house (see HABS photo #MD-967-5). There are also entries onto the porch of the rear ell. One is found along the south, interior wall of the ell on the first story, and the other, on the second story is located along the wall of the main block. Finally, there is a board on batten door into the cellar from the inside wall of the rear ell.
- b. Windows: The windows are double hung sash, with six over six lights, topped with a heavy ogee window head. The windows on the east facade and the north side elevation still have shutters (see HABS photo #MD-967-4). The only exception to this window pattern are the casement windows found in the cellar of the rear ell and a small, square fixed window which was added to the first story rear wall of the ell in 1941.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Both the main block and the rear ell have a low hipped roof, covered with slate shingles.
- b. Cornice: The cornice consists of a plain wide, unormamented board with a single step with a bead along the bottom.

C. Description of Interior:

- 1. Floor plans: See plans, pages 13-20.
- 2. Stairway: It is a open string along the south wall of the entryhall. It has an elegantly curving landing and a turned post balustrade.
- 3. Flooring: The floors are of random width boards.
- 4. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls and ceilings are plastered, painted white, void of any molding.
- 5. Doorways and doors: Many of the doorways include transoms above. This allows for increased flow of both air and light from the windows of exterior rooms. The circulation of air thus provided, along with the increase ceiling height of the rooms, helps to make modern air-conditioning unnecessary.

D. Site:

General setting and orientation: Mount Ephraim is located at the foot of the Sugarloaf Mountains, in rural western Montgomery County, with the Frederick County border running through the The house sits facing east at the intersection of Mount Ephraim and Harris Roads. It is oriented to Mount Ephraim road which runs within 28 feet of the front of the house. Its extreme proximity to the road is due to the fact that it was the residence of storekeeper, Ephraim G. Harris whose store building once sat to the north of the residence, directly at the corner. The foundation of the store building, part stone and part concrete slab, remains (a potential historical archaeology site). The house and store site was established at the intersection of what were at the time two well traveled roads, the main road from Barnesville to Frederick (now Harris Road) and the route from the furnace forge at the mouth of the Monocacy to the bloomery forge in Urbana. The property is also located near the site of a Civil War signal station. This intersection appears on the Martinet & Bond Map of 1865 and the Hopkins Atlas of 1879 as the community of "Mount Ephraim."

- 2. Historic landscape design: In the front yard, to either side of the house are old Holly trees, which are registered as among the oldest identified Hollies in the county. There was at one time an apple orchard of approximately 120 trees (Equity Case #2449, Judgment Record 10/26). Currently, a barrier of hedges along the road in front of the house separates it from the passing traffic.
- 3. Outbuildings: A number of outbuildings were once found on the property. Inventories identify a brick store house and a brick dairy, tenant houses, wagon shed and granary, blacksmith shop and stable, restaurant building and other "necessary" outbuildings. Many of these were destroyed by a fire that reportedly occurred here during the early twentieth century. The current owner, Mr. Gutheim, stated that there was a smoke house, chicken house and a barn behind the house when he came in 1941. They were in poor condition, however, and had to be removed. There are currently a number of assorted frame outbuildings to the rear of the house. The only significant outbuilding on the property today is a single story, hipped roof brick building, which Mr. Gutheim identifies as either a summer kitchen, laundry or dairy (the inventory of 1888 lists a "brick dairy", but the 1909 inventory lists a "large, two story brick dairy). This is a one story, brick, two bay wide structure with a shed roof. The windows are two over two sash with window heads that match those found on the main house. This same window head is also found over the entryway. There is an interior chimney to the center of the south side wall (see HABS photo #MD-967-9 & 10).

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Original Architectural drawings: There are no known original drawings. Record drawings of existing conditions in 1941 were made by the Washington, D.C. architect/artist, Alfred McAdams. These were the basis of the remodeling work by the Washington, D.C. architect, Julian E. Berla, later principal in the firm of Berla & Abel (see data pages 13-20).
- B. Interviews: An interview of the current owner, Mr. Frederick Gutheim was held at Mount Ephraim on September 29, 1987.
- C. Bibliography:
 - Primary and unpublished sources:

Hopkins, C.M. Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington, Including the County of Montgomery, Maryland. Philadelphia: Compiled, drawn and published from actual surveys by C.M. Hopkins, C.E., 1879.

Martinent, Simon J. <u>Martinent & Bond's Map of Montgomery County</u>. <u>Maryland</u>. Baltimore: Drawn and published by Simon J. Martinent, 1865.

Montgomery County Commissioners Tax Books, 1854-1868. Montgomery County, Maryland.

Montgomery County Judgment Records, Montgomery County, Maryland, (various equity proceedings, see Part I., section A.-3. Original and subsequent owners).

Montgomery County Land Records, Montgomery County, Maryland, (various deeds, see Part I., section A.-3. Original and subsequent owners).

Montgomery County Register of Wills. Montgomery County, Maryland (various wills and inventories of personal and real estate, see Part I., section A.-3. Original and subsequent owners).

2. Secondary and published sources:

Rothrock, Gail, ed. <u>Circling Historic Landscapes</u>, <u>Sugarloaf</u>
<u>Regional Trails</u>. Rockville, Md.: Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 1980.

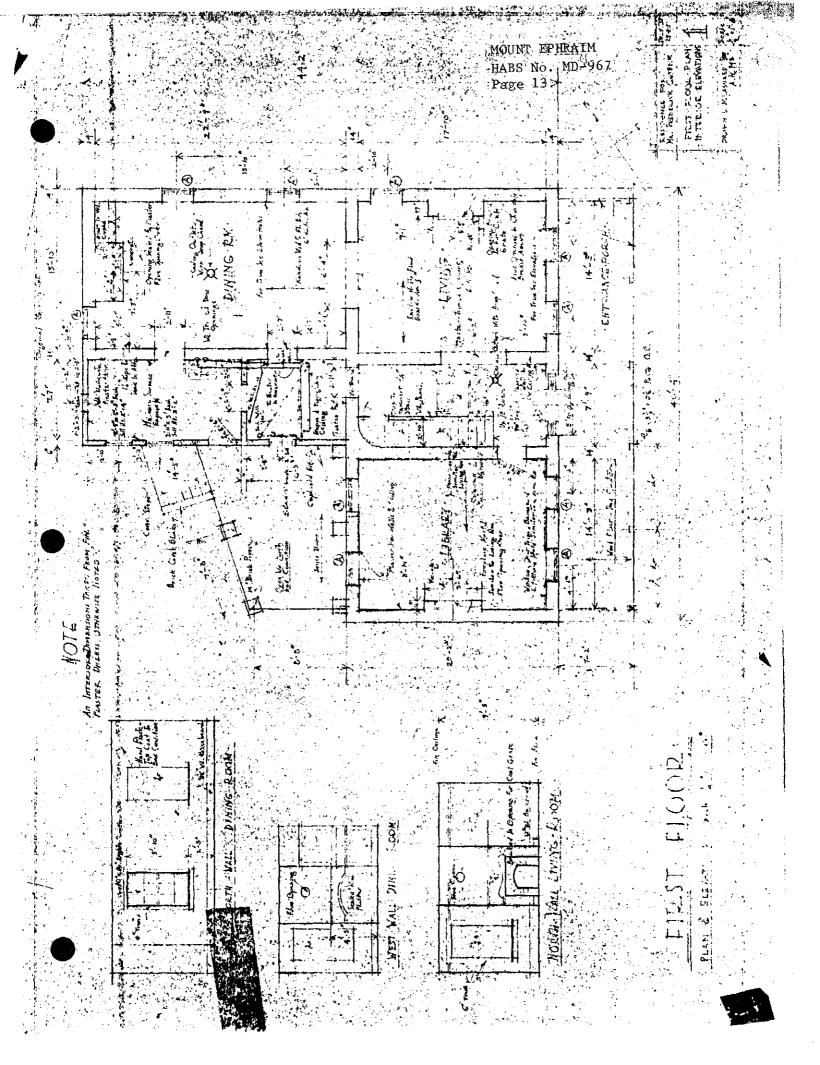
Sugarloaf Regional Trails. <u>Inventory of Historic Sites in Western Montgomery and Frederick Counties, Maryland</u>. Rockville, Md: A joint planning project of the Sugarloaf Citizens Assoc. and Stronghold, Inc., Funded by the Montgomery County Planning Board and the National Endowment for the Arts, 1975.

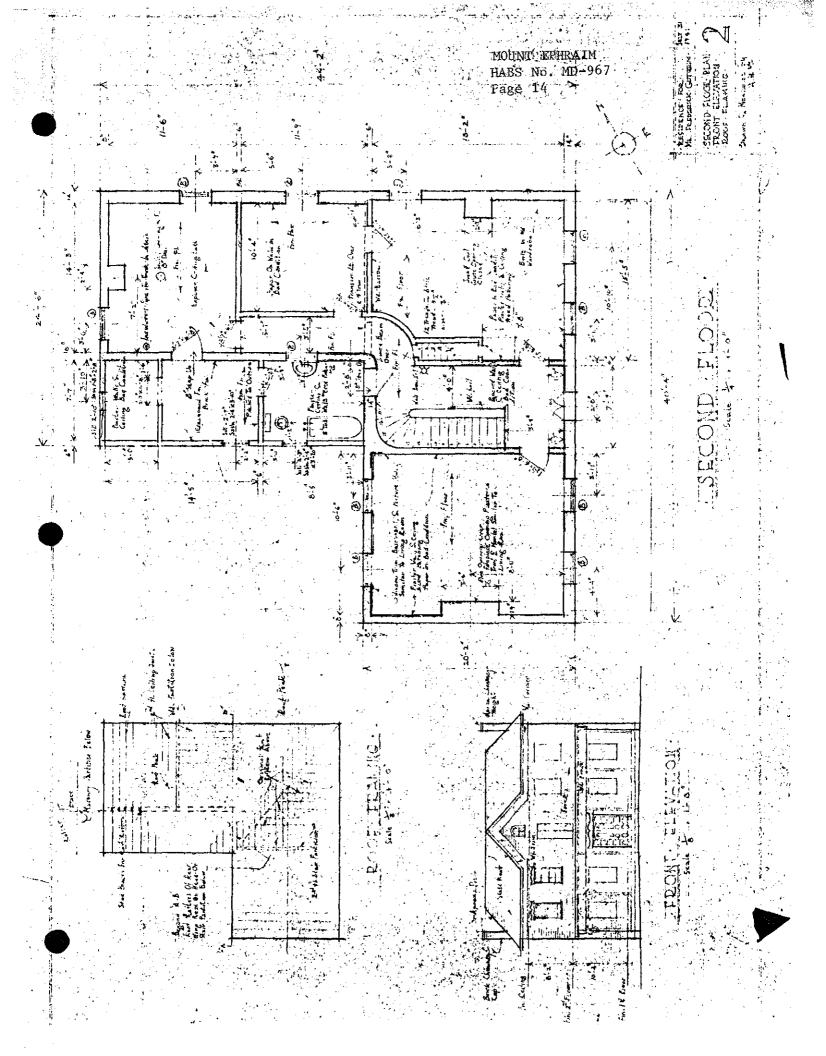
Who's Who in America, Chicago: Marquis Who's Who, Inc., Publishers (Frederick Gutheim).

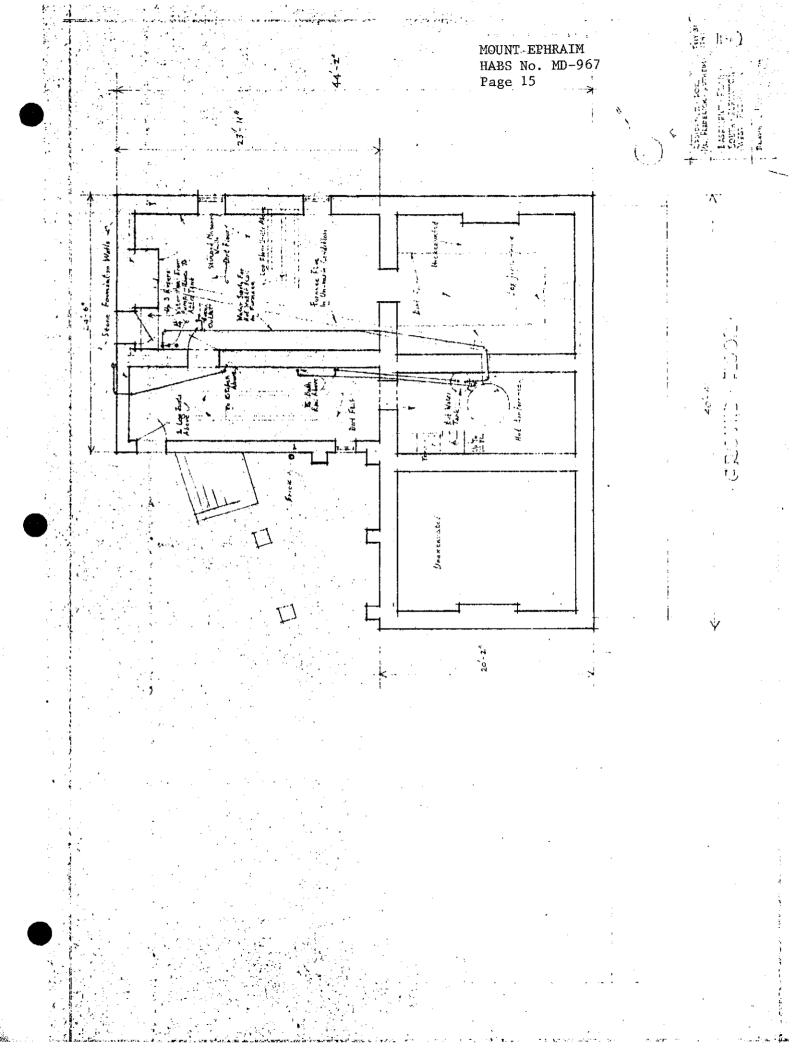
3. Other historic inventories or designations included in:

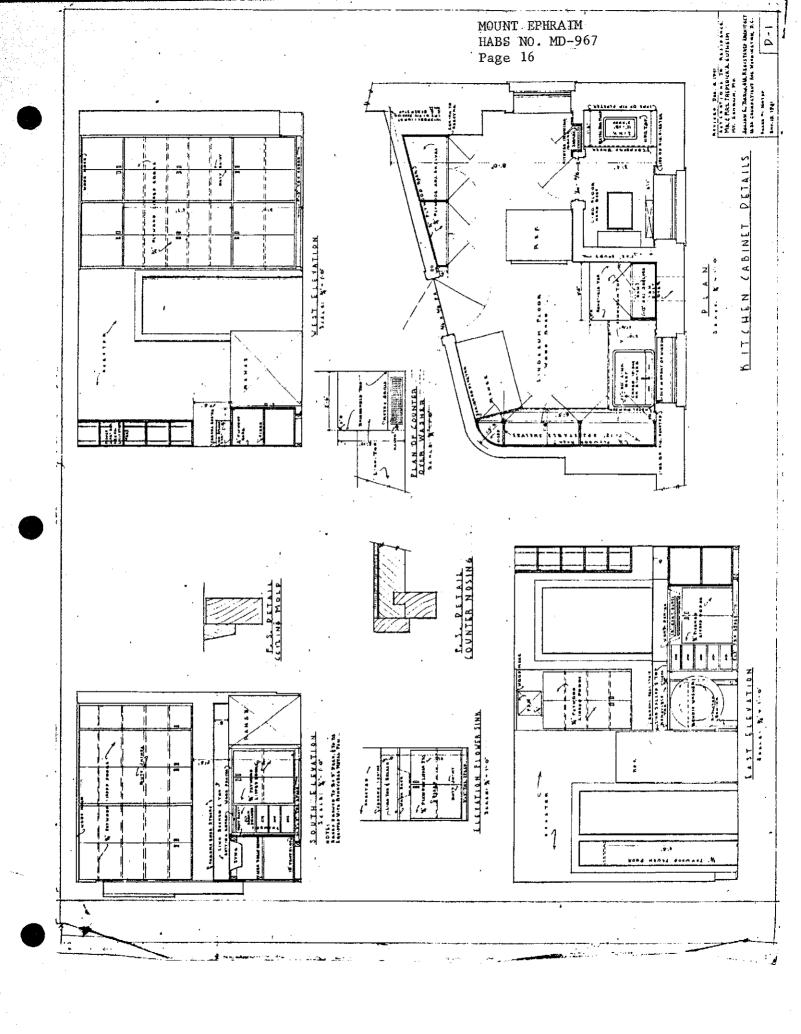
Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission. Location Altas of Historic Sites in Montgomery County, Maryland, 1976. (The result of a windsheild survey of hsitoric sites).

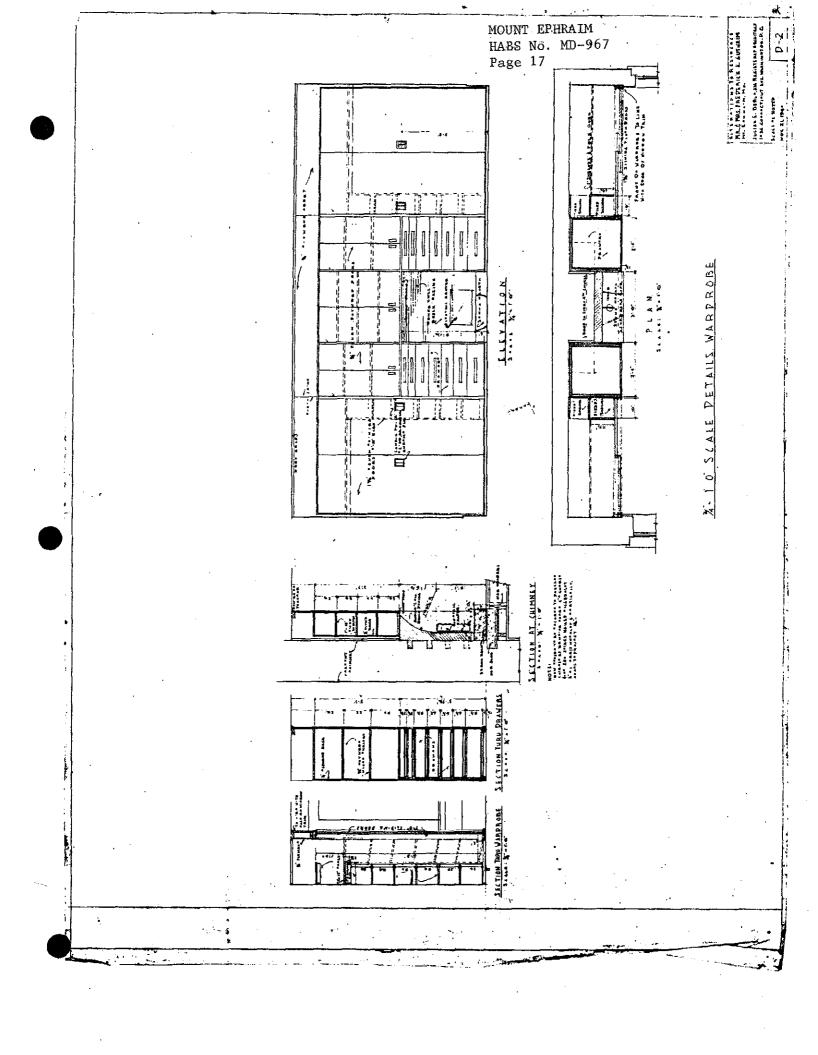
Designated site on the Montgomery County Master Plan for Historic Preservation (Mount Ephraim, Site #12-1).

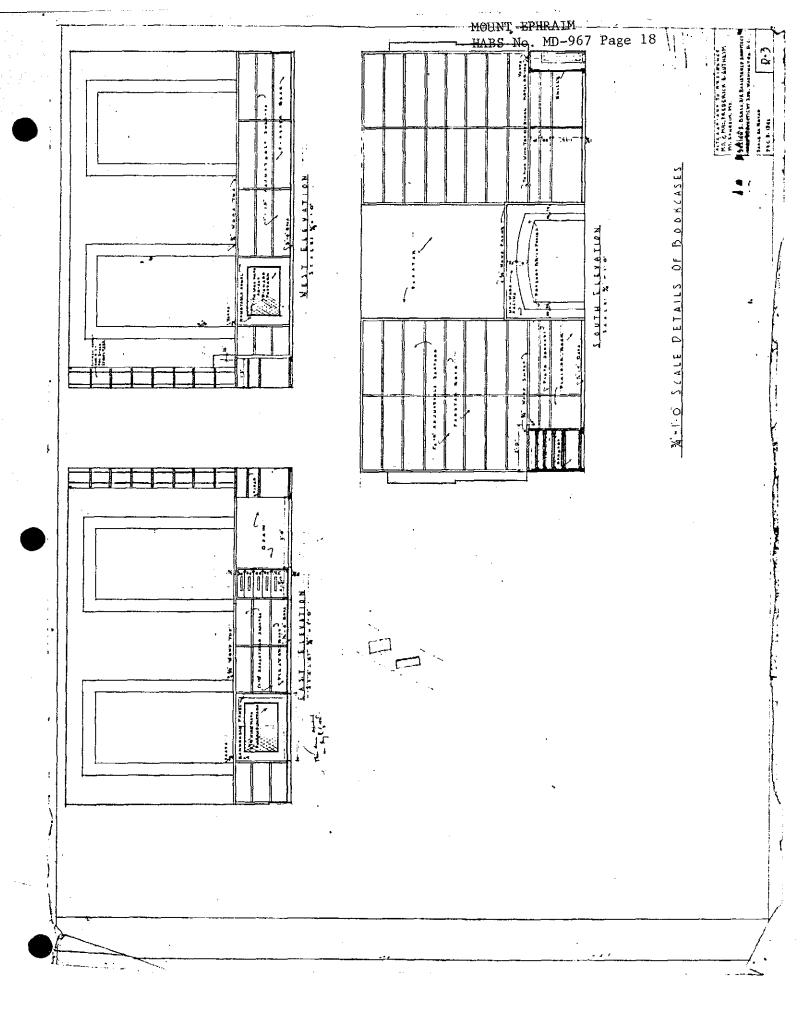


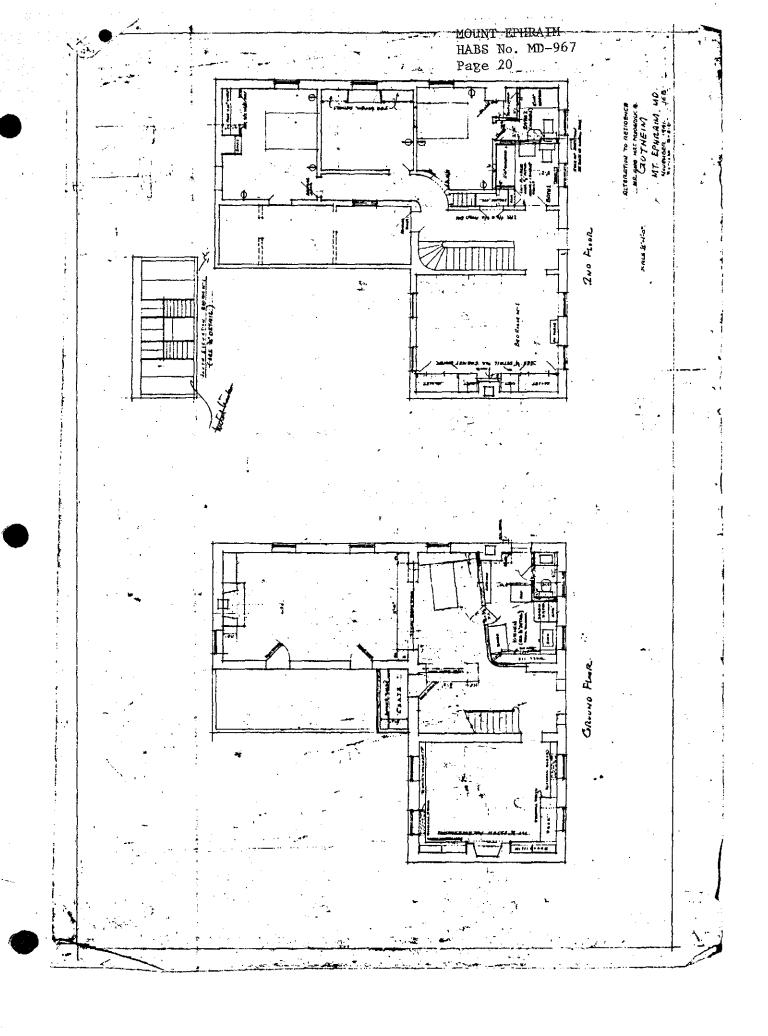












ADDENDUM TO
MOUNT EPHRAIM
(FREDERICK A. GUTHEIM HOUSE)
23720 Mount Ephraim Road
Dickerson
Montgomery County
Maryland

HABS No. MD-967 HABS MD, 16-DICK,

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National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013